(c) the action proposed to set up the infrastructure to test food samples like US corn, soya blends and other genetically modified crops and foods; and

(d) the action proposed to curb import of biologically unsafe foods ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) and (b) Imported food items are required to meet the standards prescribed in the Rules made under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 for all the products listed therein.

(c) The Department of Biotechnology is currently engaged in developing protocols using PCR and ELISA methods for identification of transgenic traits such as nucleic acids and proteins, respectively in Genetically Modified Foods and products derived therefrom through research and development endeavors at five institutions in the country. These are National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad, Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), Mysore, Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics, Hyderabad, National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, New Delhi and Industrial Toxicological Research Centre, Lucknow.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is also strengthening National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad for the establishment of a national facility for evaluation of safety of genetically modified foods. The proposal has been included in the Capacity Building Project for strengthening of Food labs in the country.

(d) The rule for the Manufacture, Use, Import and Storage of Hazardous Microorganism/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cell, 1989 notified under the Environmental Protection Act, 1986, restrict, a person from importing, manufacture, transport, storage, distribution or sale of any food, feed, raw or processed or any ingredient of food, food additives or any food product that contains GM material, without the approval of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC).

Registration of Ultrasound Centres

4532. MISS MABEL REBELLO : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Ultrasound Centres registered throughout the country;

(b) the number of Ultrasound Centres registered as Genetic Clinic and Genetic laboratories during the last two years, State-wise; and

(c) the number of Genetic Counselling Centres registered in the country during last two years, State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) to (c) Provision for separate registration of ultrasound clinics/imaging centres has come into force with effect from 14-2-2003 consequent on the amendments to the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994. However, a total number of 20252 ultrasound machines have been registered till December, 2002 in the country. State/UT wise details of Genetic Counselling Centres, Genetic Laboratories, Genetic Clinics and bodies using Ultrasound Machines registered in the country during last two years (2001-02 and 2002-03) are given in the Statement.

Resource Crunch in AIIMS

4533 SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) is facing an acute resource crunch leading to the curtailment of medical facilities to the increasing number of patients ;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to augment the flow of more funds to AIIMS so as to enable it to attend to needy and increasing number of patients coming from the different parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.